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ABSTRACT

This booklet contains a pictorial history of one-room schoolhouses in Hopkinton, New Hampshire. Following a brief description of the typical one-room schoolhouse, the history of Hopkinton's one-room schoolhouses is traced from 1768, when a town meeting voted to construct two schoolhouses, to 1936, when the last one-room schoolhouses were closed. Hopkinton's original 21 one-room school districts are listed and located on a map. Comparison photographs depict the schools in the past and today. Interviews with local residents describe their experiences as students in four of the schools. School addresses are listed. (SV)

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The One-Room Schoolhouses of

Hopkinton Village School

Hopkinton New Hampshire

RC 021781

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The One-Room Schoolhouses of Hopkinton New Hampshire

1997

An Eagle Scout Project
Constructed by Jared White
Boy Scout Troop 77
Hopkinton, New Hampshire

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Table of Contents

The One-Room Schoolhouse....1
The Story of the One-Room Schoolhouse....2,3
The list of School Districts....4
The Map of Hopkinton....5
District 1....6
Districts 2 and 3....7
Districts 4 and 5....8
Districts 6 and 7....9
Districts 8 and 9....10
District 9....11
Districts 10 and 11....12
Districts 12 and 13....13
Districts 14 and 16....14
District 16....15
Districts 17 and 18....16
Districts 19 and 20....17
Districts 21 and 24....18
Addresses of Hopkinton One-Room Schoolhouses....19

The One-Room Schoolhouse

The one-room schoolhouse, also known as the rural school, was the earliest educational system in America. The rural schoolhouses served as the foundation on which the educational system of today was constructed. The schoolhouse was typically a wooden, box shaped, one-room building. The room typically contained an assortment of student desks lined up in rows facing the front of the room where the teacher would teach the class. There would be a fireplace or a wood stove in the room used to keep the building heated during the winter months. The job of keeping the stove burning fell upon the heads of the older boys in the room. The girls were expected to keep the ink wells full. A child usually started schooling when he/she was six or seven years old. School began at eight or nine in the morning, and would continue till three or four in the afternoon. The student was responsible to get to school on time. Most students would walk to school or catch a ride with a horse and buggy. The distance to school was short because schools were placed strategically so that children did not have to walk more than a mile and a half.

The schoolhouses typically did not have distinct divisions between ages. Regardless of age all children attended school together and sat and learned in the same room. The teacher would simply line the children up by ages, putting the youngest in front and the oldest in the back. The same teacher would teach math, spelling, reading, and history. The teachers were usually young females who had just graduated from school themselves; in some cases it was necessary to bring males into the building to enforce discipline. The only materials the students used to learn with were usually a few books for spelling and reading, and a blackboard in the front of the room. Some of the schools possessed maps, globes, and reference books.

The rural schools in Hopkinton were supported and funded by the town of Hopkinton because the schools were publicly attended. The town provided the money to build and fix the school buildings; they also provided the money for the teacher salaries, school materials, and for wood. Each year a committee of three persons, called the Prudential Committee, would visit each of the school buildings. They would analyze the buildings, the teachers, and the progress of the children. At the town meeting they would present their report on how much money they thought should be raised, and where it should be spent.

The Story of the One-Room Schoolhouse

• Between 1765 and 1776 the issue over the education of the children and youth was one of the concerns of the early residents of Hopkinton. At the annual town meeting held on March 12, 1768 it was voted that two schoolhouses would be constructed for the next year. However, because of more pressing issues no schoolhouses were constructed before 1776.

• During the period of 1784-1799 steady progress was made in the support and development of the schoolhouses. In 1789, the state legislature passed an act fixing the amount that towns should be legally required to raise for the support of popular education. The town of Hopkinton was already raising above the required amount and was not affected by the new act.

• On March 14, 1820 the town raised $1,060 for the support of public schools and teachers. This was a significantly larger amount than previous years, in part because of the town's prosperity. The amount raised every year continued to be $1,060 until 1844.

• On March 13, 1827 the town passed an act concerning the welfare of the schoolhouses. For years there had been no attention paid to the supervision of the schools, which left them shabby and ill-suited for education. This act provided for a committee of three persons, whose duty would be to visit the schools twice a term and make examinations of the environment, government, and progress of the children in each of the schoolhouses. This committee was called the Prudential Committee, and they reported their findings annually at the town meetings.

• On August 10, of 1844 the state instructed the selectmen to divide the town into separate school districts. Twenty school districts were accounted for.

The Story of the One-Room Schoolhouse Cont'd

- Districts 18 and 24 were union districts. This meant that residents of Concord and Hopkinton attended them. Although Concord students attended these districts, they were supervised by the school committee of Hopkinton.

- Since 1886 the number of schoolhouses that were open each year fluctuated between 12 and 15.

- In 1885 Currier's School and the Davisville Road School were both discontinued.

- In 1914 only 4 of the original 21 old school districts were still open.

- In 1919 Farrington's Corner School was discontinued.

- In 1932 both Hatfield School, and Emerson Hill School were both closed for good.

- In 1935 Tyler School was discontinued.

- In 1936 the West Hopkinton School and the Main Road School were closed. These were the last of the rural one-room schools that operated in Hopkinton.

- Instead of going to the rural schools the students now attended the Hopkinton and Contoocook elementary schools in the lower grades and the old High School in the higher grades.

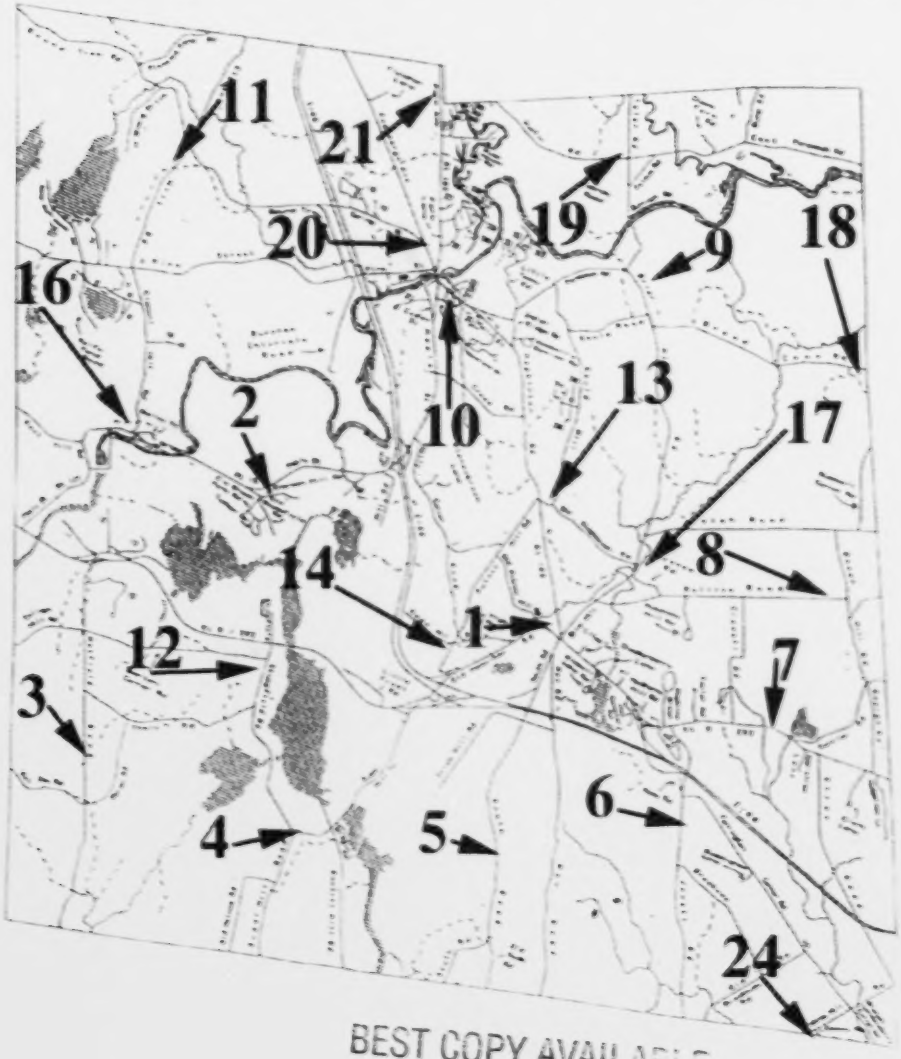
3

The Hopkinton School Districts

Hopkinton had a total of 21 one-room school districts that were supported and financed by the town. These Districts were never open at the same time, but fluctuated depending on the number and location of the students needing to attend school.

District Number	Name of School
1	Hopkinton Village School
2	Emerson Hill School
3	Hatfield School
4	Sugar Hill School
5	South Road School
6	Jewett Road School
7	Main Road School
8	Beech Hill School
9	Tyler School
10	Contoocook School
11	Clement's Hill School
12	Stumpfield School
13	Putney's Hill School
14	Gage Hill School
16	West Hopkinton School
17	Currier's School
18	Buswell's Corner School
19	Blackwater School
20	North Contoocook School
21	Davisville Road School
24	Farrington's Corner School

Hopkinton Town Map Showing Where the Twenty-One School Districts Originally Stood



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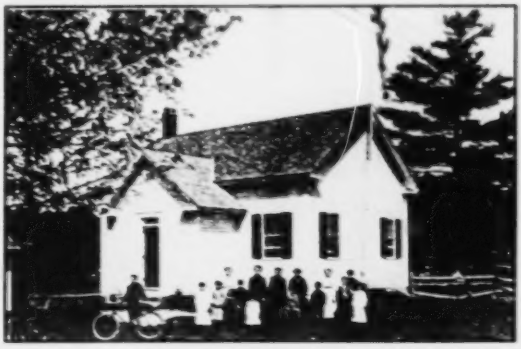
District #1 Hopkinton Village School

Rose Hanson attended the Hopkinton Village School at age 7. When she was six her mother did not want her to walk the 1 1/4 miles to school, so she was home schooled for 1st grade. When she was old enough Rose walked to school with her dinner pail and put it behind the stove to keep it warm. In bad weather her father drove her to school in a horse and buggy. Rose went to school from 9 in the morning to 3:30. The school was divided into two rooms, one room with ages 9-11 and the other room with ages 12-16. Both rooms were square. Older boys kept the fire going and sharpened pencils, while the older girls filled the ink wells. There were many windows and many blackboards. There were no bathrooms, only an outhouse. There were only three kids in her class, but twenty kids in her room. There was one teacher in each room.



Old Hopkinton Village School

At the Hopkinton Village School she was taught reading, writing, geography, and arithmetic. The children used reading, math, history, and geography books. They had maps of NH, USA, and a globe; they also used a beginner's encyclopedia called the Book of Knowledge. Rose always enjoyed her teachers, but she remembers once having a male teacher who couldn't control some of the bigger boys in class. One winter day, the bigger boys got up and threw the teacher right out the window into the snow drifts. He never came back to teach again.

Hopkinton Village School Today

Rose Hanson was interviewed by Matthew Lyman.

District #2 Emerson Hill School

Old Emerson Hill School

Emerson Hill School Today

District #3 Hatfield School

Hatfield School Today

"Like all country schools, it was a one-room classroom with a large entry, then a wood shed and two special little rooms away out in the end of the ell-one marked BOYS and one GIRLS. There was a large box stove in the class to keep it warm. The boys had to keep the fire going, and the earthen crock full of drinking water. We had an earthen crock with a cover on top, and a faucet at the bottom. Each pupil had his own drinking cup, usually a telescoping tin cup that could be carried in one's pocket.

In the country school, one teacher had eight grades providing there were children at the school in eight different grades. The teacher had the smallest children in the front seats nearest her, then the second grade and so on until the eighth. We always started the morning with the Lord's Prayer, salute to the flag and singing. Then each grade had to have English, reading, arithmetic, history, and geography, at least."

From Under the Hill, By Harry B. Sawyer, 1958, Marshall Jones Company, Publishers, Francestown, NH

District #4

Sugar Hill School

Old Sugar Hill School

Sugar Hill School Today

District #5

South Road School

Old South Road School

South Road School Today

District #6

Jewett Road School

Old Jewett Road School

District #7

Main Road School

Old Main Road School

Main Road School Today

District #8 Beech Hill School

Old Beech Hill School

Beech Hill School Today

District #9 Tyler School

Old Tyler School

Ivan Bohanan attended the Tyler School in Hopkinton for three months in 1917. The Tyler School was capable of holding six grade levels, but most years there were no children in many of the grades. There were around fifteen students in the school when Ivan attended it.

The classroom setup at the Tyler School was much like many of the one-room schoolhouses during its time. The teacher sat in the front of the class

District #9

Tyler School Cont'd

Tyler School House Today

and taught from the blackboard. The students were aligned in rows facing the teacher. The desks, which held two students each, were divided into two groups. The older students were seated on one side of the room, while younger students sat opposite them. A small wood stove was located in the back of the room. A stovepipe traveled up the center of the room and towards the ceiling. The classroom contained a few supplies for students along with a small variety of books.

The school day began at eight o'clock in the morning. Students were expected to be seated and ready to begin class when the teacher arrived. The teacher taught two grades at the same time. During this time the rest of the students were studying and working by themselves on assignments given to them by the teacher. The students learned reading, writing, and arithmetic each day. If students were disruptive or misbehaved, a verbal warning from the teacher was usually enough to calm them. If not, students were kept after class and reprimanded by the teacher. These situations were rare, because students had a great amount of respect for their teacher. The students were allowed a short recess in the morning, during which they often played outside. An hour for lunch came at noon, and then it was back to learning for the students until three o'clock when school was dismissed. Ivan was one of the few fortunate students who only had a half-mile walk to school.

Ivan Bohanan was interviewed by Greg Smith.

District #10 Contoocook School

Old Contoocook Academy building that later became the Contoocook School
No picture available of original Contoocook School

District #11 Clement's Hill School

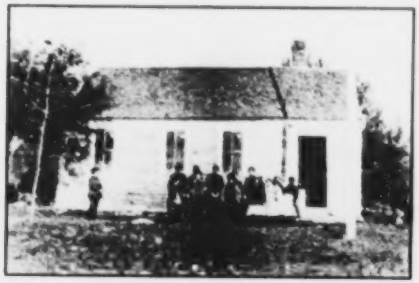
Clement's Hill School Today

12

District #12 Stumpfield School

Stumpfield School Today

District #13 Putney's Hill School



Old Putney's Hill School

Putney's Hill School Today

13

District #14 Gage Hill School

No picture available

District #16 West Hopkinton School

1st Old West Hopkinton School

1st West Hopkinton School Today

When Don Rice was six years old he attended the Emerson Hill School. A year later he started to go to the West Hopkinton School. He went to this school for five years. Don Rice would walk about a mile every day to school and on his way pick up a jug of water. After six years of going to a one-room schoolhouse Mr. Rice went to the old high school.

An average day of school was very similar to a day of school now except all of the grades were in one room. They would start the day by saluting the flag in the morning, and then get their assignments for the day. The teacher would go around to separate groups and give them their own private lessons. The tools that were used for teaching were books and occasionally the blackboard.

District #16 West Hopkinton School Cont'd

2nd Old West Hopkinton School

The blackboard hung across the back wall and a few pictures decorated the wall; other than that the room was very plain. The desks were lined up in rows and the teacher had his or her desk in the front of the room. There were about eighteen kids who attended the West Hop School, but only five were in his grade.

Back then kids were much more disciplined at home and at school. In school you were not allowed to talk, whisper, or pass notes. Some teachers made you sit up straight with both hands on the desk. When you got in trouble you would have to stay in for recess.

Don Rice was interviewed by Nathan White.

2nd West Hopkinton School Today

District #17 Currier's School

Old Currier's School

District #18 Buswell's Corner School

No picture available

District #19 Blackwater School

Old Blackwater School

Blackwater School Today

District #20 North Contoocook School

Old North Contoocook School

North Contoocook School Today

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District #21 Davisville Road School

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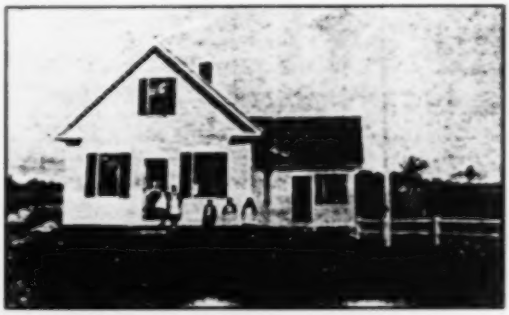
District #24 Farrington's Corner School



Old Farrington's Corner School

Farrington's Corner School Today

Addresses of Hopkinton One-Room Schoolhouses

District #1 (Hopkinton Village School) 1565 Hopkinton Road; (Hopkinton Village School Playground) 1587 Hopkinton Road
District #2 (Emerson Hill School) 89 Emerson Hill Road
District #3 (Hatfield School) 1214 Hatfield Road
District #4 (Sugar Hill School) 275 Maple Street (school moved)
District #5 (South Road School) 1811 Hopkinton Road (school moved)
District #6 (Jewett Road School) 778 Jewett Road (location only)
District #7 (Main Road School) 1014 Hopkinton Road
District #8 (Beech Hill School) 929 Rollins Road (school moved)
District #9 (Tyler School) 1556 Briar Hill Road
District #10 (Contoocook School, no building)
District #11 (Clement Hill School) 120 Kearsarge Avenue (school moved)
District #12 (Stumpfield School) 242 Stumpfield Road
District #13 (Putney's Hill School) 21 Gould Hill Road
District #14 (Gage Hill School, no building)
District #16 (West Hopkinton School) First school: 105 Clement Hill Road. Second school: 15 Bailey Road
District #17 (Currier's School) 442 Briar Hill Road (location only)
District #18 (Buswell's Corner School, no building)
District #19 (Blackwater School) 13 Tyler Road
District #20 (North Contoocook School) 80 Kearsarge Avenue
District #21 (Davisville Road School, no building)
District #24 (Farrington's Corner School) 96 Stickney Hill Road, Concord

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